

in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for image transmission, said method comprising the acts of:
 - hosting an image file on a server;
 - requesting said image file from a client;
 - parsing said image file on said server to determine a representative part of said image;
 - transmitting said representative part of said image file to said client;
 - selecting a customization of said image through a client interface on said client;
 - transmitting said customization information from said client to said server;
 - parsing said image file on said server to determine image data associated with said customization and
 - transmitting said image data associated with said customization to said client.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said representative part of said image file is a low-resolution version of said image.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said client interface prompts a user for image customization data.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein said selecting a customization comprises selecting data from the group consisting of quality data, scalability data, resolution data and region-of-interest (ROI) data.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said selecting a customization comprises displaying a thumbnail image to a user and allowing a user to select customization characteristics by interaction with said thumbnail image.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein said image file is a JPEG 2000 file.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein said transmitting uses an HTTP transmission protocol.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein said selecting a customization of said image comprises selecting an image resolution below the maximum resolution available for said image.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein said transmitting said customization data comprises streaming said customization of said image to said client.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein the size of said representative part is relative to the bandwidth of the connection between said server and said client interface.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein said representative part comprises metadata comprising data selected from the group consisting of image quality data,

scalability data, resolution data and ROI data.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein said client caches data recieved from said server.

13. A method for interactive customized image transmission, said method comprising the acts of:
- hosting an image file on a server;
 - requesting said image file from a client;
 - transmitting a thumbnail version of said image file to said client;
 - selecting a customized version of said image through user input at said client;
 - transmitting said customized version information from said client to said server;
 - reading and parsing said image file at said server to determine image data required for said customized version; and
 - transmitting said image data required for said customized version to said client.
14. The method of claim 13 further comprising reading and parsing said image file to determine thumbnail image data required to communicate said thumbnail image.
15. The method of claim 13 wherein said selecting a customized version of said image comprises selecting an image resolution below the maximum resolution available for said image.
16. The method of claim 13 wherein said selecting a customizatized version of said image comprises selecting quality scalability.

17. The method of claim 13 wherein said selecting a customization of said image comprises selecting a region of interest on said image.
18. The method of claim 13 wherein said image file is a JPEG 2000 image file.
19. The method of claim 13 wherein said transmitting employs a HTTP transmission protocol.

20. An apparatus for interactive customized image transmission, said apparatus comprising:

a server having an image file stored thereon;

a parser on said server for parsing said image file and determining what image file data is required to communicate various customized versions of said image file;

a client having a client image interface;

wherein said client image interface enables a user to request a customized version of said image file and said parser on said server has the ability to determine what image data is required to communicate said customized version and transmit said image data to said client.

21. An image server enabling interactive customized image transmission, said server comprising:

storage for storing at least one image file;

a receiver for receiving requests from a client for customized versions of said at least one image file;

a reader/parser for reading and parsing said image file and determining what image data is required to render said customized versions of said image file; and

a sender for sending said customized image data to said client.

22. A computer-readable medium comprising instructions for creating a customization of an image file, said instructions comprising the acts of:
- storing at least one image file;
 - receiving requests from a client for customized versions of said at least one image file;
 - reading and parsing said image file and determining what image data is required to render said customized versions of said image file; and
 - sending said customized image data to said client.

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23. A computer data signal embodied in an electronic transmission, said signal having the function of creating an image index file, said signal comprising instructions for:

storing at least one image file;

receiving requests from a client for customized versions of said at least one image file;

reading and parsing said image file and determining what image data is

required to render said customized versions of said image file; and

sending said customized image data to said client.